

**SECRET**

IDEA 0092

Copy 2 of 2

29 MAR 1962

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Chief, Development Branch, DPD  
Chief, Materiel Staff, DPD  
Chief, Contracts Branch, DPD

**SUBJECT:** Accident Investigation Report

1. Recommendations of the board which investigated the accident in which aircraft #344 experienced structure failure and resulted in fatal injury to the pilot are listed below:

a. Recommendation #1:

That Lockheed Aircraft Corporation re-evaluate the structural integrity of the U-2 aircraft for combined loads imposed while maneuvering during aerial refueling, emphasizing the possibility of jet engine effect and wing tip vortex.

b. Recommendation #2:

That Project Headquarters and Headquarters SAC, re-evaluate the requirement for aerial refueling for the U-2 aircraft.

c. Recommendation #3:

That aerial refueling of the U-2 aircraft be suspended until recommendations 1 and 2 above have been resolved.

d. Recommendation #4:

That if aerial refueling remains a firm requirement, consideration should be given to a different type tanker aircraft compatible with the safe operating limitations of the U-2.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

**e. Recommendation #4.a.:**

That rendezvous equipment be installed whereby positive positioning - receiver to tanker, tanker to receiver, or both - may be utilized on all missions. Rendezvous procedures should be re-evaluated with emphasis placed upon tanker overtake of the receiver. (Action: USAF, Project Headquarters, SAC, ASD, and LAC).

**f. Recommendation #5:**

That Lockheed Aircraft Corporation provide a seat ejection system that will insure successful ejection of the pilot under all possible flight conditions. (Action: Project Headquarters, ASZ-5, and LAC).

**g. Recommendation #6:**

That the present U-2 ejection seat system be considered unreliable, and the U-2 Flight Handbook be changed to direct "Bailout without ejection seat" as the primary bailout procedure. (Action: Project Headquarters, ASD, SAC, and LAC).

2. It is mandatory for continued operational planning with due recognition to flying safety requirements that each of the recommendations be followed up in detail and that we obtain immediate replies from action agencies.

3. The present status of action as near as can be determined follows:

**a. Recommendation #1:**

Lockheed Aircraft Corporation is probably in the process. However, no information has been available to Headquarters.

**b. Recommendation #2:**

AC/DPD has reaffirmed the requirements for aerial refueling as it pertains to project aircraft. No contact with Headquarters SAC is anticipated.

**SECRET**

## SECRET

c. Recommendation #3:

Aerial refueling operations and training has been suspended.

d. Recommendation #4:

A memorandum has been forwarded from Special Projects Branch to Development Branch requesting that Lockheed Aircraft Corporation conduct feasibility tests for refueling the U-2 from KC-97 tankers.

e. Recommendation #5:

It is assumed that Lockheed Aircraft Corporation is presently re-evaluating the seat ejection system, however, no information on this subject has been received in Headquarters.

f. Recommendation #6:

Operational detachments have been directed to change the primary bailout procedure from ejection seat bailout to non-ejection bailout.

4. Special Projects Branch will assume the responsibility for keeping operating detachments advised of actions taken by Headquarters or Lockheed. It is requested that all message traffic or memoranda pertaining to this accident be coordinated with Special Projects Branch.

20 - WED/KE  
11 - WED/BA  
10 - WED/BH/IDEV  
10 - WED/C/IDEV  
1 - WED/BD  
cc: AG/DPB, C/DPB, DPB  
ASST/CH/DPB  
DPB/BPB/IDEA

WED/BA  
WED/BA/IDEV (to view files)

25X1A

25X1A [REDACTED]  
Lt. Colonel USAF

Chief, Special Projects Branch, DPB

## SECRET

25X1A DPD/SPB/[ ]ph (29 March 1962)

Distribution:

- #1 - DPD/C/DB
- #2 - DPD/C/MS
- #3 - DPD/C/Contracts
- #4 - AC/DPD
- #5 - ASST CH/DPD
- #6 - DPD/SPB/IDEA
- #7 - DPD/SPB
- #8 - DPD/RI

SECRET